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were entrusted to a faithful expressman, one of those disinterested public servants who persistently outrage every public right, and go on doing their own sweet will with perfect nonchalance, the trunk containing the aforesaid necessary articles did not arrive, having probably been sent to New Orleans, consequently Mrs. Abbott could not appear. An apology was made to the units present, who tapped their ten fingers together in token of regret, we presume, but the manner was so ghostly that the meaning was indistinguishable. The company was very mixed, and the witticisms expressed after the performance were choice and pointed. One man was asked how he liked the "show?" He said "it was first rate; that the big man, (meaning the bass) had a voice like a bull." This sample must suffice. We must say, however, that if the Flushing-ites are not fast to pay they are not slow to charge, the simple hotel bill being about double the receipts of the concert. However, a general desire was expressed that the concert should be repeated! Cool! wasn't it? If we were a party concerned, we should say in the language of the immortal bard, "don't you wish you may get it?"

Are there no Tenors in America? Sounds there no single A of might and worth in these United States—must Oratorio die for want of a native or resident tenor? It seemeth so, for Boston sends to England—'tis said—seeking a tenor for its forthcoming Festival in June! Hide your diminished heads, ye tenors of Columbia, and gnash your degraded teeth; your country will have none of ye! The case must indeed be desperate, when Boston sends 3,000 miles for a plant which, it seems, grows not on American soil.

We hear on good authority that Madame Parepa-Rosa has made an arrangement with Mr. Maguire for an operatic *tournee* in California of three months' duration, commencing in August next. Madame Rosa is joint *impresario* in this undertaking with Mr. Maguire, the principals being engaged by her, the band and chorus by her colleague. We doubt not that this prominent artiste and *primissima donna* will reap a golden harvest in the auriferous regions of the Pacific. We congratulate California generally on its approaching feast of *Operepa*.

#### "THE ARION," AT THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC, ON THE 5TH INST.

This masquerade ball was certainly the finest, the most original, and the most effective, that ever unfolded itself to the festive inclined New York. It was the golden page of the ball season thus far. The committee of this society deserves praise and thanks, nay even admiration, for the exquisite arrangements, good accommodations, great civilities, and unremitting attentions to their patrons and guests. On entering the vestibule, the balmy air that met us was rich with the rarest odors of the tropics, and recollections of the splendor of dazzling Arabian nights transported, amazed and bewildered almost every joyful heart and soul. Arriving at the entrance of the ball-floor, the *coup d'oeil* was magnificent to behold. The boxes were filled with beautiful terrestrial angels, whom we so deservedly acknowledge to be the fairer sex, wrapped and attired in rich silks and satins, and most gorgeously dressed in all sorts of costumes of all record-

ed ages and of all nations, representing many oddities, yet much good taste in form and color. Until 9 o'clock the stage was concealed by a red curtain. Only a "Big Barrel," called *Heidelberger Fass*, lay conspicuously in the centre of the floor. At 10, p. m., precisely, this *ne plus ultra* of all "hogsheads" was tapped by a number of coopers, and out of it emerged: three mercuries, four police clubs, standard bearer with the carnival's farmer; master of ceremony in gala carriage drawn by diminutive hobby horses; three wig makers, carrying the ends of the master of ceremonies' wig; two aids-de-camp, riding on big snails or green lizards; music band with their leader and banner; floor committee, in the costume of Wallenstein's body guard; lobby committee, in the costume of falconers; drum-major's hat; rattle guard; a gigantic silver dollar, representing good times; a torn greenback, illustrating hard times; deputation from the animal kingdom; Johnson's defenders; congressional protectors; light and heavy artillery. At the conclusion of this procession, Prince Carnival mounted his throne, placed under a gorgeous pavilion in front of a revolving, glorious, but fantastic sun, and his faithful subjects indulged in all sorts of frolics, merriment and gaiety, instigated by the strains of music (a perfect avalanche of harmony,) which floated from the amphitheatre from hundreds of instruments, filling every heart with delight and ecstasy. The verdict of all guests was unanimous in praise, and this year's "Arion Festival" will long remain in pleasant memory of all its patrons.

#### THE "LA GRANGE AND BRIGNOLI" TROUPE.

New York will be glad to learn that Manager Strakosch returns here on Monday next, after a short but brilliant campaign in the interior, and opens at the Academy of Music with these admired artists in "Lucrezia Borgia."

#### WHAT THE THEATRES ARE DOING.

It is so long since we have had to record anything new in the dramatic way, that we go to the task with some misgiving as to its reality, and much doubt whether we may not awake and find Humpty Dumpty an empty dream, and the revival of *Rosedale* a sham.

There is something sweetly amusing, however, in speaking of *Rosedale* as a novelty, and yet if the genial public is to be credited on its acts, *Rosedale* is a novelty, or they would not rush in such eager thousands at its announcement as to monopolize every seat in the house a week ahead. This part is certain that on Monday last, when it was offered for the first time this season, in ten minutes after the doors were opened, the house was densely packed, and the inevitable sign "Standing Room Only," was hung above the box office for the delectation of those who blessed their unlucky stars that had not permitted them to arrive earlier.

To speak of *Rosedale*, critically, at this late day of its career, is like talking of Hamlet or Othello; everything has been said on the subject that can be said, and the conclusion has been arrived at by the press and the public, that it is about the cleverest acting play that has been put upon the stage since its original birth. If this fact was accorded in past seasons, it certainly has lost none of

its savor in the present, when all the strength of the first cast is retained, while the play has been more elegantly mounted than ever before. In truth, we feel in looking at the production of *Rosedale*, at Wallack's, that we are looking at the most elegantly got up play that has ever been on the American stage, or perhaps any other. The first scene, of *Rosedale House* and adjoining grounds, is a triumph of stage art, and the second scene in the fourth act, the Gipsy Dell, is superb.

Taking *Rosedale* for all in all, scenic beauty, clever acting, well selected music, and general effect, it is a wondrous success, and we expect nothing less than to be obliged to record the observation, for the next few months, that "it is running yet." And now for "Humpty Dumpty."

Humpty Dumpty is sufficiently famous in history not to need verification at our hands. One fault we must find either with the author or the management at the start, and that is on what we term a mis-reading of the original text. He, or they render it in this wise:

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall,  
Not all the king's house, nor all the king's men  
Could get Humpty Dumpty up again."  
Now the true and original reading of this charming historical poem, as we have it in illuminated M.S.S. of the twelfth century, is as follows:

"Humpty Dumpty on the wall,  
Humpty Dumpty got a fall,  
All the doctors in the land,  
Couldn't make Humpty Dumpty stand."

We commend this true and approved reading to the dramatist, Mr. Fox, and feel willing, should there be doubt in his mind on the subject, to leave the case as it stands to Mr. Bancroft, Williams the bill poster, or any other equally eminent literary gentleman.

That point being settled we will fall back on Humpty Dumpty, and say that if Mr. Fox intended in his composition to give us a little of everything that is existent and non-existent, he has certainly succeeded. The grand drama opens with a colloquy between a good-looking Romance and a right pretty little Burlesque, who discuss "matters in general," as Solon Shingle says, and arrive at the conclusion that as all creation are to be amused the right way to amuse them is to get up a pantomime, and straightway they go at it. The next moment the stage is one succession of marvels; doors turn into blank walls, boxes into chairs, walls into tables, puddings into heads, and vice versa, while boys grow in five minutes from five years old to twenty, to say nothing of other trifles of the same kind, including a live pig, *a la Daly*—we thought *that* stage effect was patented—and, in short, everything except the locomotive scene.

In the midst of all these wonders the ballet breaks in at two or three places like a dash of poetry in the midst of a comic oration, and we have Sangali, Betty Rigi, M. Baptist, and a score of coryphees, each of whom a few years since would have been considered a premiere, in the most fascinating *pas*, and voluptuous poses.

The pantomime is in one act and sixteen scenes, lasting altogether about two and a half hours, and upon this point we do most earnestly protest. It is a matter worthy the attention of Mr. Bergh that a thousand peo-

ple should be kept that length of time in their seats without even the chance of standing up. It is unprecedented in theatrical annals, and, earnestly, should be immediately corrected by cutting the entertainment into two parts, and give the public, as well as the neighboring saloon-keepers, some chance for their—lives.

In the tenth scene a skating pond is introduced, and "champion" skaters do various strange things on parlor skates. This part of the affair scarcely adds to its attractions, and could be dispensed with advantageously. There are several beautiful scenes, but the "Dell of Ferns," changing to the Retreat of the Silver Sprites, is gorgeously grand, and surpasses, if such a fact can be realized, the superb transformation scene in *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Humpty Dumpty is undoubtedly destined to a three months' run, and to that end we consign it.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

ROME, February 1.

DEAR MR. WATSON:

I am in Rome! With what a thrill of delight do I record this triumphant event, for at last the dream of years is realized, and I am in Italy—in Rome, august "city of the soul." We entered the mighty city by starlight, and through the evening darkness I recognized some of the familiar places that I had known from childhood in pictures—the Piazza de Spagna, with its fountains and broad, high stone steps, which our dear old Anderson has commemorated in his charmingly romantic "Improvisatore." Our four days' journey is now ended; it has been a journey of unlimited variety and pleasure. We left Paris at 8 o'clock P. M., and each in our corner of the luxurious cars, prepared to be very comfortable. We were in the "grandest vitesse" of France, and we rushed on with American speed all through the gloom of the night, until we had penetrated into the far South, and by the glimmer of a few pale stars we looked out upon the slumbering city of Lyons. With the first faint gleams of gray dawn, the beautiful Midi lay before me—the land of poesy and Provençal bards. As we approached Marseilles, the prospect expanded into broad, sterile fields, rocky and undulating, made, however, picturesque by the dark green verdure of the thick, low olive trees. With a glowing noonday sun, a pale azure sky, and the softest, balmy May air, we entered the quaint old city of Marseilles. Here there was little of interest, excepting a magnificent drive, the Prado, of which the Marseillais exultingly say, "If Paris only had a Prado, it would be a little Marseilles!" We remained in Marseilles about thirty hours, waiting for our steamer, the Pausilippo, as the Messageries Impériales only send out their boats once a week. I was truly glad to be again *en voyage*, for Marseilles impressed me, as the French style it, more like "Le Bout du Monde" than any other place I have ever visited. We went on board the Pausilippo at 8 P. M., but, as a gale was blowing, we were obliged to wait until three the next morning, for the harbor is very dangerous as we run out between islands; but when once fairly at sea we met with a most gracious reception from Father Neptune. The beautiful Mediterranean had assumed for us her calmest mood, and the sky was of a richer, warmer hue than I had ever seen it in my

dear Northern home. And what a charming voyage! It seemed like a pleasure-day excursion, now skirting the shore of France, now a glance at some of the lovely islands of this heaven-blue sea, and then the first glimpse of the romantic Italian coast. All through the voyage I was haunted by souvenirs of the sweet pictures drawn by Richter of the shores of Italy and its blue cloud islands—Pausilippo, Capri and Isola Bella—in his wonderful romance, "Titian;" and mingled with these images, a floating vision of the crafty Ulysses wandering over these classic waters.

The first sight of Civita Vecchia, with her two tiny fortresses, impresses one somewhat as a toy military post, and much derision at her formidable aspect was expressed by a party of Englishmen beside me. Then as we approached nearer the familiar gleam of the French uniforms gave me a momentary pang of homesickness for dear Paris. The boat could not enter the harbor, therefore we were obliged to go off in a little *barca*. The novelty of being rowed by a picturesque boatman over the clear rippling water, up to the very steps of the Douane, was a charming finale to our pleasant voyage. And now we are on Italian soil, and over the Douane floats the Papal flag. We arrived at an unfortunate hour, the morning express train to Rome having left; but we passed away the three hours *d'attente* very pleasantly rambling about the old town, mounting its ramparts, and throwing back a parting kiss to the dear Mediterranean, so beautiful in the ardent sun-glow; then we walked out into the open fields and picked the daisies that were blooming so fresh in the bright green grass the last day of January. We passed several detachments of French troops, commanded by very charming officers, who lifted their caps to bid us *bon jour*, and a great many contadini and beggars in the orthodox costumes of bright colored rags, and we tried very hard to meet a brigand and get robbed, but were not successful.

At 3 P. M. we left Civita Vecchia by a slow train that stopped at every intervening station, thus prolonging our two hours' ride to four and a half, during which time we passed no town, and only caught glimpses of lonely villas nestling in the dark shadows of the distant violet-covered hills, but traversing this desolate plain that encircles the city of the Tiber was far from tedious. For me it was the Roman Campagna, and every isolated mound and lonely monument was as vivid with interest as a chapter from the world's history by the pen of the immortal Gibbon. There was something so impressive and mysterious in the whole aspect, the Campagna stretching miles away to mingle with the misty horizon; the declining sun tinging the mountain slopes and burnishing the distant sea; the white wooden cross erected by the wayside; the landscape flecked with solitary herds, and over all the solemn, brooding stillness.

Sunday, the 2d, being the feast of the Purification (Candlemas Day in the English Church), we attended High Mass at St. Peter's. There are only a few festivals in the year when the Pope appears publicly at St. Peter's, so we were very fortunate in arriving just in time for the solemnities of the "Purificazione." Half-past eight found us on our way to the church, attired in the costumes *de rigueur* for fête days—black dresses and black lace veils—for although bonneted ladies robed in colors are admitted into the

church, they are not permitted to take seats. We are all familiar with the Piazza San Pietro, with its column and colossal statue of the Saint, the two fountains and the colonnades surrounding the piazza, and the grand old Church; but once inside, oh, how wonderful! It surpasses my highest expectations, my most glowing dreams. So mighty, so glorious! We walked through the nave, with a long file of soldiers on either side, to the tribune reserved for ladies, for St. Peter's is not disfigured by pews or chairs, and tribunes to hold about fifty ladies are erected on the right and left of the altar on feast days only. A Chamberlain, in a very elegant dress—black velvet, with white knee-breeches and high boots, an antique ruff, an immense gold chain, and a very handsome face—stood beside the tribune and showed us our places. We found ourselves seated among a party of American ladies—one or two beautiful young girls among them—and all talking about a *soirée musicale* that they had attended the previous evening. The conversation was quite interesting to me, as Liszt had been present, and his manners and appearance were minutely described. There was also an infant prodigy who had played "an entire sonata of Beethoven, repeats and all!" to the great annoyance of these ladies; so it would seem that infant prodigies are a universal affliction. We had about two hours to wait before the commencement of the ceremonies, but we passed away the time very agreeably star-gazing after the pictures and frescoes, and watching the ever-moving stream of people—soldiers and civilians, ladies whose dress did not admit them into the tribune, the Papal Zouaves in their simple gray uniforms, and the Swiss Guards in their fantastic dress of scarlet and yellow. At last eleven o'clock struck, and a burst of music from a military band announced the arrival of the Pope. Then the procession formed: first half a hundred demure little altar-boys marched two and two, then followed all the priests in Rome, if not in Christendom; next came the Greek and Roman bishops with the glittering mitres, and the Cardinals in scarlet and ermine; then advanced the Guardia Nobile, in their beautiful blue and silver uniforms; and now the troops present arms, and the whole church are on their knees, for the Pope is borne in on a canopied throne-chair. Dear, good old Holy Father, he has just that benevolent, melancholy smile that we always see in his portraits. Cardinal Antonelli walks at his right hand, that world-famous Minister. On the right of the altar the Pope's throne is erected, and there he sits while the bishops, priests and officers of the guard advance to kiss his hand, and receive from him a lighted candle. Then the Mass commences, one of the Cardinals officiating. The music comes from behind a screen; there is neither organ or instruments, but only a chorus of soprani, and rising above all, with wonderful distinctness, we hear the voice of Mustapha, the chief singer of the Sistine Chapel, aged seventy. Wonderful, indeed, is his voice, but not satisfying; to me it seems unearthly, and totally wanting in the "sympathique" quality. At the close of the Mass the Papal benediction is given, and once more the grand procession forms to bear His Holiness back to the magnificent equipage, with postillions and equerries, that awaits him under the colonnades. There stand also the carriages of the Cardinals, with scarlet-liveried footmen, and in a